

I wish all of my colleagues safe travel back to their districts, and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I have just a couple of questions for the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY).

Can the gentleman tell us the day in which campaign finance will be brought to the floor?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the campaign finance reform will be considered on Tuesday, and I might add we expect that to be a fairly lengthy debate and we would expect Members or advise Members to expect a late evening on Tuesday.

Mr. BONIOR. Does the gentleman expect a late evening other than Tuesday next week?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. We can tell the gentleman we will conclude business by 6:00 or so on Wednesday evening. The Hispanic Caucus has a very important dinner, and the schedule will accommodate to that dinner.

We expect that Thursday evening might possibly run a little late, but we certainly would hold to our 2:00 departure time on Friday.

Mr. BONIOR. I thank my colleague.

Finally, let me just ask my colleague that in August, before the recess, about 18 colleagues on the gentleman's side of the aisle signed a letter to the leadership asking that the minimum wage bill be brought up this fall before we adjourn for the year, and I am just wondering if the gentleman, who I know has a real fondness for the minimum wage bill, would enlighten us on when and if that will happen.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Yes, we are aware of this interest on the part of the Members on both sides of the aisle. We have key Members of the House working on that. I can only say to the gentleman he might expect something later in the year, but I have nothing more definite to say on that.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding, and have a good weekend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

CHINA SHOULD NO LONGER RELY ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO BLOCK AMERICAN PRODUCTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, 5 months ago, the American agriculture sector celebrated the signing of groundbreaking market access agreements with China. In April 1999, Chinese Premier Zhou Rongji signed three bilateral agreements with the United States designed to open agricultural markets. These agreements concluded decades of discussions on sanitary and phytosyntax trade barriers which had locked American farmers out of Chinese markets.

Upon signature, China agreed to immediately begin implementing these agreements, permitting access to China's vast markets.

The larger issue of Chinese WTO accession was not resolved in April, but the side agreements were considered a significant victory for American farmers.

China has long relied on technical barriers to block American products. For more than 20 years, wheat from the Pacific Northwest has been banned because of unfounded concerns about TCK smut, a wheat fungus. The rest of the world recognizes that TCK poses no threat to human health and does not affect the quality of the product, yet China has maintained its ban for all of these years.

Meat producers have largely been shut out of the market because China has only allowed imports from five approved U.S. plants and all citrus growers have been locked out because of

concerns about Mediterranean fruit flies in certain regions.

In signing the three agreements, China agreed to accept USDA certification for meat safety for U.S. exports of pork, beef and poultry; eliminate the current comprehensive ban on citrus fruits and eliminate restrictions on the import of Pacific Northwest wheat. All future SPS disputes will be settled scientifically.

The potential consequences of the agreement were tremendous and touched most agriculture districts in the United States. But unfortunately, the disagreements remain only a distant unrealized potential. Three weeks ago, a member of my staff traveled to China to discuss implementation of these agreements. The Director General of American Affairs within the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Corporation indicated that China did not intend, did not intend, to implement the agreements until discussions were concluded on WTO accession.

Such a decision would be in direct contravention of the April agreement, which held that implementation would begin immediately. Agricultural producers should not be held hostage to WTO negotiations, and I expect China to uphold its bilateral commitments.

We as a Congress, we as a country, we as people who care about our agricultural sector, should expect China to uphold its bilateral commitments. This should serve as a test case if Congress discusses permanent normal trade relations with China later this year as a part of a WTO agreement. If China delays action on agricultural agreements that have previously been signed, it raises serious questions about the sincerity of other commitments to implement market access agreements.

The April draft WTO agreement would have resolved a wide range of other outstanding market access issues: trading rights, distribution, quotas, reliance on state trading companies and export subsidies. The U.S. Trade Representative did a great job in moving China toward a tariff based system, with extremely low tariff rates, but if China is unwilling to act on the Sanitary Phytosanitary Agreement, it seems likely that we may see continued reluctance on other aspects of any WTO agreement.

So I am sending a letter to President Zemin and President Clinton urging immediate implementation of the bilateral agricultural agreements, and I urge any Member of this body who represents producers of wheat, pork, poultry, beef or citrus, to join in the signing of this letter. With low prices already hurting our farm leaders across the country, we should not stand by and let them continue to be locked out of one of the largest markets in the world.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.